

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
CU-04 HA-05 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 /083 W
-----070952 211841Z /47

R 211223Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1140
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
CINCUSAFE
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
EUCOM GER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ANKARA 2124

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PORS, ELAB, TU
SUBJ: ECEVIT CONFRONTS DISK OVER DEMONSTRATIONS

REF: A) ISTANBUL 0819; B) ANKARA 2064

1. ON MARCH 20 PRIMIN ECEVIT ENTERED A HEAD-ON CONFRONTATION WITH ONE OF HIS PARTY'S PRINCIPAL SUPPORTERS, THE LEFTIST FEDERATION OF REVOLUTIONARY LABOR UNIONS (DISK), OVER AN ILLEGAL TWO-HOUR WORK STOPPAGE IN PROTEST AGAINST THE KILLING OF FIVE STUDENTS IN ISTANBUL MARCH 16(REF A). ABDULLAH BASTURK, PRESIDENT OF GENEL-IS AND NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF DISK, HAD CALLED ON MUNICIPAL WORKERS TO ABANDON BUSES AND CUT OFF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY AT 8 A.M., THE HEIGHT OF THE MORNING RUSH HOUR. THE STOPPAGE RESULTED IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MASSIVE TRAFFIC JAMS IN ANKARA AND OTHER CITIES AND LED TO DEMONSTRATIONS. POLICE REPORTEDLY MADE MORE THAN 400 ARRESTS IN ANKARA ALONG.

2. PRIMIN ECEVIT REACTED SHARPLY, SAYING THAT THE PROTEST WAS ILLEGAL AND WARNING THAT PARTICIPANTS WERE FALLING INTO THE "TRAP" LAID BY THOSE WHO WISH TO SEE A "FASCIST AND

UNCONSTITUTIONAL REGIME" ESTABLISHED IN TURKEY. HE PROMISED THAT THOSE WHO ACTED OUTSIDE THE LAW WOULD BE PUNISHED. BOTH HE AND HIS PART SECGEN, MUSTAFA USTUNDAG, AFFIRMED THAT THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY HAD NO DEBTS TO ANYONE BUT "THE PEOPLE".

3. COMMENT: ECEVIT NO DOUBT REGARDED DISK'S ACTION AS A CHALLENGE. HE TOOK A FIRM STAND IN RESPONSE, BOTH BY POLICE ACTION AGAINST THE ILLEGAL DEMONSTRATIONS AND BY PERSONNALLY DENOUNCING THE ACTION OF AN IMPORTANT INSTITUTION OF HIS CONSTITUENCY. WHILE IN OPPOSITION, HE INSISTED THAT THE TERMS OF HIS PARTY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH DISK WERE NOT TO BE DICTATED BY DISK. NOW THAT HE IS PRIMIN, IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO HIS LEADERSHIP THAT HE NOT SHOW HIMSELF AS FAVORING THE LEFT IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT CIVIL STRIFE. AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE PLAYED BY DISK PRESIDENT BASTURK AND ITS POSSIBLE EFFECT ON HIS LEADERSHIP WILL FOLLOW. SPIERS

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Message Attributes

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